



February 9, 2015

Co-Chairs Maynard & Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of Proposed Bill 6366: An act making foreign birth certificates acceptable forms of identification to obtain a "Drive-Only" License.

Since the implementation of the Drive-Only License program, Junta for Progressive Action has seen a growing number of clients and community members raising concerns over the list of documents accepted by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The single most common complaint has been the refusal of the DMV to accept foreign birth certificates as proof of identification. Junta applauds the efforts by Representative Candelaria to improve this important program.

Much of the confusion and discontent from community members centers on the fact that marriage and baptismal certificates are acceptable documents, while birth certificates are not. Several of our clients have expressed that this unfairly favors people of faith, while those who choose not to get baptized, attend church, or get married are left with fewer options. An additional source of frustration from our clients is the language on the DMV document checklist that says the DMV will accept baptismal certificates or "any similar document." Although the DMV website has now been updated to clarify that this does not include foreign birth certificates, this was not at all clear when the program was originally announced. DMV staff has been unable to explain why there is such a distinction between birth and baptismal certificates, which only causes community members' confusion and frustration to grow.

Proposed Bill 6366 brings Connecticut's Drive-Only Program up to par with similar programs around the country. Among the growing list of states with similar driver's license programs, at least eight accept foreign birth certificates. This is a straightforward, commonsense update to this policy, and I ask for the committee's positive consideration of the bill.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nick Torres
Director of Advocacy

*JUNTA for Progressive Action is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status organization.
Your contribution is tax-deductible.*